

## Mapping stakeholders' roles in governing sustainable tourism destinations

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Presented to facilitate cooperation and interaction, our framework can be easily translated into policies and tourism engagement strategies that guide national and local government in improving harmonization among stakeholders in managing the destination; thereby seamlessly implementing sustainable tourism initiatives. This is particularly significant as tourism moves towards a post-pandemic situation. Despite the seeming application of top-down approaches in governance, our model reiterates the importance of shifting governance from the destination to the value chain, wherein stakeholder cooperation and collaboration are keys to reboot the industry. This warrants stakeholder engagement to help redesign tourism experience for the new normal, where synchronizing the value chain is key to recouping visitor's confidence towards travel.

#### Keywords:

Conservation  
Governance  
Livelihood  
Regulation  
Stakeholder  
Sustainable tourism

### ABSTRACT

Tourism planning and development has revolved around sustainability concepts and issues. Addressing concerns on sustainability, environmental conservation, and local community involvement has become increasingly challenging. Success in developing sustainable destinations has been deemed to be a function and result of effective governance. However, tourism governance remains indistinct on the questions of how tourism stakeholders interact and how this interaction can be beneficial in achieving sustainability. By appealing to the fundamental principles and practices of sustainability and how stakeholder involvement and participation are fused into sustainable tourism development, we develop a 5-point tourism stakeholder framework that will explain how tourism stakeholders can harness their roles and collaborative advantages in governing destinations through regulation, conservation, and livelihood. Findings will have propositions on how tourism stakeholders can advance pursuit of sustainable tourism.

### Introduction

Tourism has created significant impacts on the economy, rural and urban development, employment, environment, and sustainability. According to the World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC] (2019), the direct, indirect, and induced impact of travel and tourism (T&T) in 2019 accounted for USD 8.9 trillion contributions to global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (i.e., 10.3% of global GDP); 330 million jobs (i.e., 1 in 10 jobs around the world); USD 1.7 trillion visitor exports (i.e.,

6.8% of total exports; 28.3% of global services exports); and USD 948 billion capital investment (i.e., 4.3% of total investment). According to Yu (2012), tourism being a consumer of inputs and producer of final goods makes greater impacts on GDP thereby establishing its role as an economic pillar.

Benefits from tourism should be shared amongst a wide range of stakeholders (Heslinga et al., 2019), with emphasis on local communities (Foxlee, 2007; Rivera & Gutierrez, 2019; Roxas et al., 2020). Tourism's interdependence with other sectors implies that everyone can

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partake from tourism's benefits (Yu, 2012). Hence, in pursuing sustainability,<sup>1</sup> coordinating various stakeholders (i.e., authorities, tourists, tourism business, local people)<sup>2</sup> is vital (Björk, 2000). Developing synergetic interactions among stakeholders involved in governance processes is essential for effectively sharing tourism benefits (Heslinga et al., 2019).

In achieving sustainability, governance of tourism destinations remains a challenge. Following the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 2030 Tourism Roadmap for Inclusive Growth, the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 17 (i.e., partnerships for the goals) requires strengthened partnerships and collaboration among stakeholders. Consistent with Heslinga et al. (2019), sustainable tourism is further defined by efforts to invest in more communities and individuals, shape better institutions and policies, and boost infrastructure development, among others (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], 2013). Realizing sustainability requires enhanced partnerships that bring together civil society, private sector, and governments along with other national and international actors (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019). Given the tourism industry's systemic nature, the challenge of pursuing sustainability has become more pronounced (Hall, 2011). According to the Global University Network for Innovation [GUNI] (2018), SDG17 tackles challenges that are systemic with emphasis on the means of implementing initiatives. To fulfill this, it requires transparent actions, monitoring of the achievements and processes, and appropriate communication – “accountability to society” (p. 87). Thus, stakeholder governance is vital in supporting the creation and implementation of effective solutions to problems faced by the industry (Shahzad et al., 2016).

As suggested by Kooiman (1993) and Pierre (2005), governance refers to the changes in the role of the government and an increasing role of non-government actors with the objective of realizing collective goals of public and private actors. Essentially, governance is understood as “the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and cooperative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest.” (Commission in Global Governance, 1995 as cited in Ascher et al., 2016, p. 102). In pursuing sustainability, this translates to the interaction and active participation of tourism stakeholders (Björk, 2000). For Heslinga et al. (2019), this is called developing synergies, which Persha et al. (2011) described as facilitating interactions among stakeholders to realize greater collective outcomes across social and ecological purviews. Thus, tourism development and nature protection should not be in conflict. It should be balanced and mutually supportive (Heslinga et al., 2019).

In pursuing sustainable tourism, Byrd (2007) argued that stakeholders (i.e., present and future visitors, present and future host community) must be involved in the process. Hence, a multi-stakeholder or value chain approach is obligatory (Rivera & Gutierrez, 2019). According to Koscak and O'Rourke (2017), “the most successful models of multi-stakeholder action have been those which combine elements of

international and national intervention as well as the distinctive inputs of regions and local communities, whether public, private or mutual” (p. 262). Similarly, the contribution of a full range of stakeholders in planning and decision-making is vital to determine communities' long-term interest (Javier & Elazigue, 2011).

Meanwhile, Clifton and Amran (2010) argued that among stakeholders, the business sector is seen as the major cause of ecological harms. Thus, they need to play a key role in the resolution of these problems by reducing pollution, increasing resource efficiency, investing in green technologies, redesigning products and services to make them more environmentally friendly, engaging with various social actors to improve firm performance in meeting social expectations, and transferring modern technologies to poorer nations, among others. On the other hand, Pulido-Fernández and López-Sánchez (2016) touched on the perspective that tourists can also be patrons of sustainability by focusing on the economic implications of tourist preferences for more sustainable destinations. That is, tourists with high levels of “sustainable intelligence” (p. 2) are willing to pay more to visit a more sustainable tourism destination.

In achieving SDG17, which calls for engaging multiple stakeholders, it is important to tackle the value of stakeholder participation in governing tourism destinations. While there are frameworks identifying the stakeholders and their roles and relationships as individual actors in the tourism industry, it is necessary to expand the discourse towards underscoring interaction among other stakeholders and incorporating the role of tourists. Thus, one of our contributions is an inclusive and holistic examination of the relationship between tourism stakeholders, tourists, and sustainability. While it is important to analyze the role and interaction of various stakeholders, it is also fundamental to scrutinize the importance of tourists in advancing sustainable tourism. Few studies have touched on tourists' roles and contribution to sustainability. Beyond knowing stakeholder preferences, it is also vital to cognize how stakeholders can pursue sustainability individually and collectively.

Hence, we pose this two-pronged research question: *how do the roles and relationships among tourism stakeholders adjust when they interact with each other; and how can these interactions be beneficial in pursuing sustainable tourism?* Addressing these is hinged on the need for a seamless stakeholder interaction and cooperation from the demand and supply side. In addressing our research question, we set the following objectives:

- To review existing frameworks on stakeholder interactions in the tourism industry;
- To operationalize the concept of sustainable tourism by mapping the roles and synergies of stakeholders in governing tourism destinations; and
- To propose an augmented stakeholder framework that will explicate how tourism stakeholders can establish synergies and harness their respective roles and collaborative advantages in governing destinations.

Our study contributes the following. On knowledge component, we contribute to literature on sustainable tourism by augmenting existing frameworks through emphasis on interaction and synergies among tourism stakeholders in governing destinations. This is relevant because to foster stakeholder interaction and synergies, governance arrangements have to be identified (Lockwood, 2010) as these affect the processes by which synergies are activated or inhibited (Heslinga et al., 2019). Similarly, since governance, as a conceptual frame, is not typical in tourism literature (Bramwell & Lane, 2011), we explore this construct using a holistic approach that treats social and ecological components collectively (i.e., social-ecological systems framework). As such, we understand the interactions among tourism stakeholders; and we augment our cognizance of governance processes that could facilitate SDG17. On policy component, our framework can assist authorities and concerned stakeholders in implementing effective governance

<sup>1</sup> According to Javier and Elazigue (2011), “sustainable tourism development refers to the management of all resources that meets the needs of tourists and host regions while protecting the opportunities for the future, in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems” (p. 2).

<sup>2</sup> Alternatively, as enumerated by Pacific Asia Travel Association [PATA] (2015), “tourism stakeholders groups include industry operators, government departments and associations, visitors, the community, investors/developers, landowners, industry associations, tourism-related organizations, community and environmental groups” (par. 2).

**Table 1**  
Summary of reviewed literature on tourism governance.

Authors	Summary
Haiying et al. (2018)	A framework on the hierarchy of TEC stakeholders grouped according to latent, expectant and definitive stakeholders. These stakeholders include local government, national government, tourism operators, community residents, and tourists.
Koscaç and O'Rourke (2017)	Explored the potential benefits of bottom-up approaches over top-down models in tourism governance by conducting comparative case-studies.
Nongsiej and Shimray (2017)	Contributing to the discourse on tourism entrepreneurship, the study explored the contribution of tourism entrepreneurship businesses to the development of tourism, specifically in creating employment opportunities, in improving the standard of living, and in rural development.
Nagarjuna (2015),	In conducting a content analysis of websites of selected wildlife resorts, the study found the significance of local community involvement in fostering sustainable tourism development.
Hörisch et al. (2014)	Developed a conceptual framework to further bridge the gap between stakeholder theory and sustainability management. From the framework, three challenges were observed: first, sustaining the interests of stakeholders regarding sustainability, empowering stakeholders, and building mutual interests among stakeholders.
Ramukumba et al. (2014)	By exploring the case of George municipality in the Western Cape Province, South Africa, the study explored the socio-economic impacts of tourism on tourism entrepreneurs. The study found that tourism allows for a more effective response in poverty alleviation.
Erkuş-Öztürk (2011)	A transformation in governance approaches in various tourism destinations can be observed where non-state actors such as NGOs and trade associations can influence existing institutions to increase and enhance their capacity.
Dredge and Whitford (2011)	Suggested that governance may occur in multiple spaces in public where actors come together to discuss matters relating to tourism governance.
Duffy and Moore (2011)	Explored how international and local governance merge and interact in tourism. In exploring the case of Thailand and Botswana's trekking and safaris, it was found that established global regulation and standards influence governance at the local level. INGOs and NGOs are found to play a critical role in influencing practices domestically.
Gill and Williams (2011)	Identified a hybrid combination of governance models of community-driven and pro-growth approaches. A combination of bottom-up and top-down approach to tourism governance may be used advisable for the governance of tourism destinations. In the case of a ski resort in Whistler, Canada, a top-down approach followed by a bottom-up approach was deemed effective.
Hall (2011)	Presented a tourism governance typology which highlights the hierarchical forms of regulation in tourism governance. This further suggests four (4) modes of coordination among government and non-state actors, namely: markets, networks, communities, and hierarchies.
Jamal and Watt (2011)	In examining the case of community-based action in Canmore, Canada, found that governance of tourism sustainability must involve multiple participants, including tourists and residents, to ensure that constant interaction allow for the creation of informed actors.
Javier and Elazigue (2011)	Using the context of the Philippines, the study examined the challenges and opportunities on the role of local government units in tourism development and planning.
Moscardo (2011)	Provided diagrams that summarize that tourism policy and planning processes, conveying a social representation of tourism governance. Identified actors include tourists, tourism businesses, government actors, external agents, and residents.
Sparrevik et al. (2011)	Active participation of stakeholders as individuals primarily responsible for the implementation of strategies in local communities and destinations.
Franco and Estevão (2010)	A model which highlighted the importance of public-private partnerships in tourism in facilitating local and regional development. Several stakeholders were combined: local government, tour operators, tourism industry, universities, public sector and government, tourist destination community, and tourists.
Koutsouris (2009)	Suggested that tourism governance may involve a process of social learning, where governance is perceived in a continuous process of reacting and responding to changing circumstances, thereby allowing for a naturally evolving governance type.
Byrd (2007)	The study investigated how stakeholder involvement is incorporated in the concept of sustainable tourism development by conducting a systematic literature review. Four key groups were then identified: future visitors, future host community, present visitors, and present host community.
Provan and Kenis (2007)	Model of network modes namely: participant-governed networks, organization-governed networks, and network administrative organizations, which primarily focuses on the role of organizations on governance
Miller and Twining-Ward (2005)	Identified several other stakeholders involved in tourism development, namely: residents, industries, tourists, government officials, and non-government organizations (NGOs). Tourism governance may integrate adaptive management which allows destination managers to apply a trial and error process which allows them to adjust and adapt according to experiences. Critical to this process is the involvement of numerous stakeholders in monitoring development mechanisms.
Bramwell and Lane (2000)	The study explored the role of stakeholder collaboration and strengthened partnerships in effective tourism planning to achieve sustainability.
Fennell and Malloy (1999)	The study examines the nature of tourism operators and how their backgrounds influence the conduct of their daily business operations.
Buhalis and Fletcher (1995)	The study examined the effect of stakeholders (tourists, local community, tour operators, and tourism organizations) in the management and use of natural areas. The study suggests the need to establish close cooperation and collaboration between public and private sectors.
Yiannakis and Gibson (1992)	The study explored the ways in which tourist roles are conceptualized and measured in relation to their interests and activities. According to the study, there are at least 13 leisure-based tourist roles.
Gilmour and Fisher (1991)	The study explored the value of collaborative management in the context of forestry management in selected destinations in the Philippines, India, Nepal, Cameroon, among others.

Note: Arranged from latest to earliest.

mechanisms in pursuing sustainable tourism.

## 2. Literature review

### 2.1. Systematic literature review

We conducted a systematic literature review (SLR) (Dewey & Drahota, 2016) to establish the extent of existing research on tourism governance models. In doing so, gaps in the literature were identified; thereby, reinstating the significance of this study. We adapted the SLR process of Pertheman et al. (2019) and Kitchenham and Brereton (2013).

Our review was conducted on several tourism governance models, frameworks, and discussions. Scholarly journals were searched and

selected from different electronic academic databases. Searches were not limited to sources in English nor restricted to any location. It focused on articles with visual diagram and discussions relating to tourism governance vis-à-vis sustainability. Research keywords used were: *tourism governance*, *governance models*, and *stakeholder governance models*. Reviewing the title, abstract, general ideas, and full-text criteria were done to decide whether the study should be included (see Table 1).

### 2.2. Sustainable tourism and stakeholder involvement

The discourse on sustainable tourism has not only revolved around the concept of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) (Elkington, 1997), but also encompassed the value of stakeholder involvement. As Bramwell and

Lane (2000) mentioned, tourism is considered a multi-stakeholder industry comprised of stakeholders with a range of objectives and interests. In pursuing sustainability, Byrd (2007) emphasized that its success greatly depends on active involvement of stakeholders in the entirety of the process. Thus, all respective interests and perspectives of tourism stakeholders are considered equal and valid (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Similar to Björk (2000), sustainable tourism involves extensive cooperation between tourist companies, tourist destinations, and authorities (national, regional, local) to hurdle challenges and remain competitive (Angelkova et al., 2012). This is supported by cases of tourism development in the United Kingdom (UK) (Robson & Robson, 1996) and Cyprus (Ioannides, 1995), among others. The involvement of stakeholders, while emphasized by the existing literature, requires further consideration: who are considered stakeholders in tourism; and how they will be involved in the process of tourism development (Byrd, 2007).

As first proposed by Freeman (1984), stakeholder is defined as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organizations objectives” (p. 46). Donaldson and Preston (1995) expounded on this by stating that for an individual or a group to be considered a stakeholder, it must have a legitimate interest in the organization. From these, several literatures (e.g., Björk, 2000; Fennell & Malloy, 1999; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005) identified a range of tourism stakeholders including tourists, industries, residents, government officials, and non-government organizations, among others.

Beyond identifying stakeholders, the seminal work of Murphy (1985) introduced the value of stakeholders' participation. As suggested, tourism planning and developing necessitate that “more actors should become involved, those who are experts and those who are affected” (p. 172). Gunn (1994) emphasized the value stakeholder support from entrepreneurs, citizens, and community leaders. Similarly, Arnstein (1969) stressed the value of further identifying the level of participation among stakeholders in various collaboration processes. Stakeholder participation can avoid conflicts among stakeholder groups involved in tourism development (Healey, 1998).

For most studies, local community participation remains vital in the process of pursuing sustainable tourism (Matthew & Sreejesh, 2017). Bramwell (2010) suggested that the participation of destination communities is key to attaining sustainability through their involvement in tourism planning and governance. This is supported by the community-based tourism approach of Murphy (1985). Finally, Drake (1991) emphasized the value of local participation as an element of tourism governance and sustainable development.

### 2.3. Governance in sustainable tourism

As an approach to development, sustainable tourism espouses participatory approach to governance (Gutierrez, 2019). It is important that policy decisions relating to sustainable tourism reflect the respective views of stakeholders about how tourism will be developed (Bramwell, 2007). With the changes that have occurred, governance has shifted from being solely exercised by the government to one that can be exercised by a range of stakeholders (Stoker, 1998). The presence of an increasing number of actors, organizations, and institutions is continuously influencing the form of governance existing in destinations (Erkuş-Öztürk, 2011b). Therefore, governance is vital to ensure that playing fields are leveled among stakeholders so that everyone can contribute to the process of sustainably developing tourism destinations (Geiger, 2017).

Bevir (2009) suggested that in the context of tourism, governance includes the characters and arrangement of the set of processes, rules, and institutions where policy decisions are made and where authorities exercise their decisions that affect a specific destination. Here, the concept of governance is considered broader than the role of the government (Goodwin & Painter, 1996). With sustainability, governance, as suggested by Pierre (2005) and Kooiman (1993), refers to the

changes in the role of the government and an increasing role of non-government actors with the objective of realizing collective goals of public and private actors. In the prospect of tourism governance, certain issues arise in terms of stakeholder participation. Beierle and Konisky (2000) highlighted two issues: a top-down approach where experts make decisions (i.e., such decisions are often perceived as irrelevant to a local community's interests and opinions); and the system which facilitates the decision-making process is deemed problematic with competing interests embedded within itself that hinders public interests.

To address these, studies emphasized on the role of various stakeholders in tourism governance. Goodwin and Painter (1996) underscored that tourism governance encompasses formal agencies and actors within the political process (i.e., private sector, media, voluntary organizations). Jamal and Getz (1995) supported the concept of participation in tourism governance, which highlighted the value of collaborative policymaking in destinations. Erkuş-Öztürk (2011a) offered a more specific view in analyzing governance by considering the relationship and coordination between state and private sector. On the other hand, Garrod (2003) and Sofield (2003) reinforced the importance of community participation and social empowerment in planning of destinations. Clifton and Amran (2010) emphasized the significance of corporate practices in contributing to sustainability.

Concisely, Connelly and Richardson (2004) highlighted the value of consensus building, which entails the achievement of an ideal outcome and form of governance through an agreement among stakeholders. Given the importance of stakeholder participation in the governance of tourism destination, studies have developed frameworks of tourism governance.

### 2.4. Research gap

From these tourism governance frameworks, we saw that only the relationships between and among stakeholders have been heavily expounded. There has been a scarce discussion on the roles, synergy, and co-responsibilities of tourism stakeholders. More importantly, there has been no elucidation on what can be achieved when specific stakeholders bind together and harness their respective collaborative advantages. As such, we saw the need to contribute to the discourse on tourism governance and sustainability where existing issues on sustainability require an innovative and encompassing framework (Hörisch et al., 2014). In moving from mere conceptualization of sustainability, we offer a framework that aims to operationalize the concept of sustainable tourism by mapping the roles of stakeholders in governing tourism destinations. Building on the need to explore existing frameworks to examine and enhance the literature on sustainability management identified by Starik and Kanashiro (2013), and Garvare and Johansson (2010), we propose a 5-point tourism stakeholder framework that will show how tourism stakeholders can identify their roles to create synergies and harness collaborative advantages in governing destinations through their respective responsibilities in regulation, conservation, and livelihood-creation.

## 3. Methodology: framework on governance of tourism destinations

With the goal of facilitating active participation among stakeholders, several frameworks on tourism governance have been proposed. From the SLR conducted, we have seen in Table 1 studies touching on governance of tourism destinations and suggesting several trends in tourism governance. Furthermore, in creating our framework, we are guided by the social-ecological systems (SES) framework – the most comprehensive conceptual framework for diagnosing interactions and outcomes (Partelow, 2018). A better understanding of the interactions that drive dynamics is vital for crafting sustainable management strategies (Schlüter et al., 2014).

Deviation from focusing on internal governance processes within the government following a hierarchical structure (Sautter & Leisen, 1999), transition from government to governance processes by non-state actors (Duffy & Moore, 2011; Erkuş-Öztür, 2011b; Franco & Estevão, 2010; Hall, 2011), emergence of networks and public spheres (Dredge & Whitford, 2011; Jamal & Watt, 2011; Provan & Kenis, 2007), and other complex forms of governance have been observed in examining the existing discourse on tourism governance (Gill & Williams, 2011; Moscardo, 2011; Koutsouris, 2009; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005). This suggests that effective governance is critical to the sustainable management of tourism destinations. In relation to the achievement of sustainability, the literature emphasizes the role of stakeholder interaction. It was observed that studies also emphasize the importance of public-private interaction where government and non-government stakeholders work together on destination governance.

We following the governance approach of Bramwell and Lane (2011), which delineated the discussions between literature that focused on the governance processes, with little to no government intervention, from literature that considered new trends in governance through networks, quasi-markets, public spaces, among others. We also appealed to the analysis of dos Anjos and Kennell (2019) suggesting that the tourism governance literature can be segmented into four trends: shifting role of government, emergence of networks, complex forms of governance in the midst of globalization, and changing roles of management organizations and actors. From our literature review, there is agreement on the need to converge various approaches to fully capture the complexities of tourism governance and address the apparent challenges to sustainability.

Key to this is the value of consensus building in the face of sustainability challenges. García-Melón et al. (2012) explored the case of Los Roques Archipelago National Park and found that through constant and regular contact among stakeholders, a better understanding of opportunities and strengths to sustainability were established.

### 3.1. Creating the framework

Being a dynamic vehicle of economic growth, tourism is comprised of stakeholders whose interests drive the industry. For instance, there are public and private interests that create the propensity for the industry to influence legislation, environmental protection, job creation, and poverty alleviation, among others. Moreover, the exposure of the tourism industry to non-diversifiable risks (e.g., natural and man-made calamities, security threats, and economic and political instability) calls for wider participation of actors in pursuing sustainability.

**Baseline Framework.** In creating our framework, we appeal to Björk (2000) (see Fig. 1). Björk (2000), in an illustrative case in Finland's ecotourism, developed a framework highlighting the role of cooperation among authorities, tourists, businesses, and local people.

**Expanded Framework.** Building on this, we appeal to Buhalis and Fletcher (1995) who demonstrated a dynamic wheel of tourism stakeholders where the value of the relationship between stakeholders in the implementation of objectives is highlighted (see Fig. 2). This suggests that tourism strategies should consider the ideas, expectations, and interests of stakeholders including entrepreneurs, resident population, tourists, public sector and government, tour operators. It depicted that destination managers (i.e., government) must serve as regulatory bodies that manage the relationship of each stakeholder to ensure that benefits and responsibilities are fairly shared. By accounting for stakeholder interests and synergy, benefits and responsibilities can sustainably be realized.

**Proposed Augmented Framework.** From Björk (2000) and Buhalis and Fletcher (1995), our proposed five-point framework, resembling a star, indicates the actors that must realize their roles, which entail cooperation and interaction to pursue sustainable tourism (see Fig. 3).

We also followed recent and early studies on tourism stakeholders done by Haiying et al. (2018), Koscak and O'Rourke (2017), Erkuş-

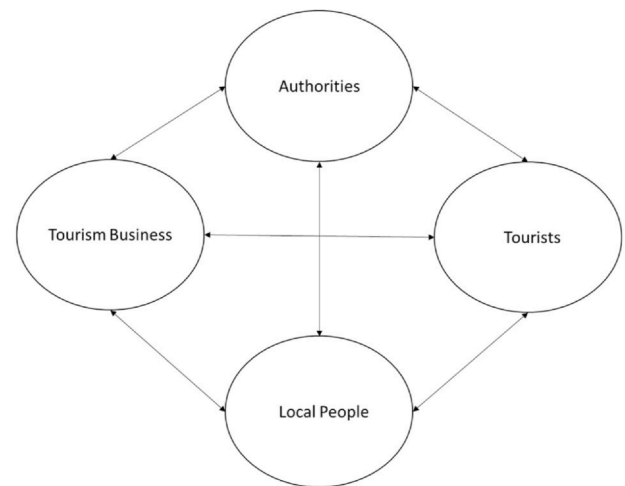


Fig. 1. Central Actors in EcotourismSource: Björk (2000); reconstructed by authors.

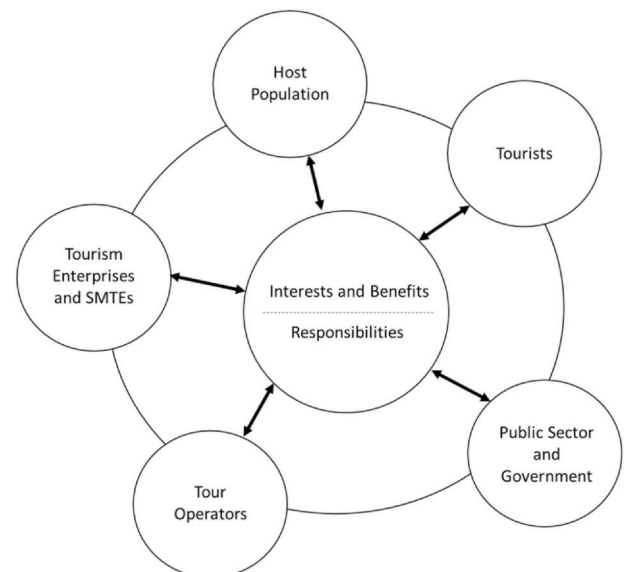


Fig. 2. Dynamic Wheel of Tourism StakeholdersSource: Buhalis and Fletcher (1995); reconstructed by authors.

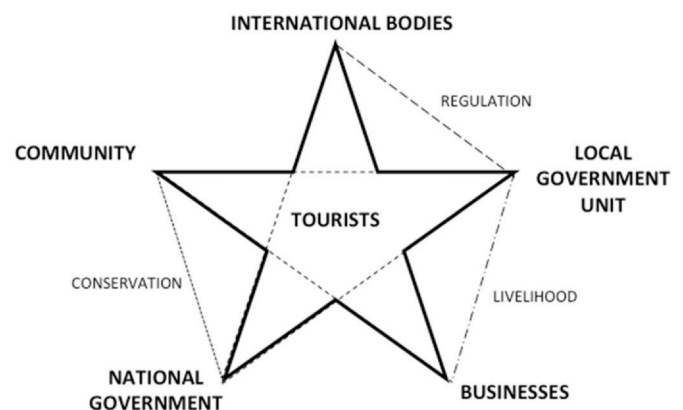


Fig. 3. Star model of tourism stakeholders.

Öztürk (2011a, 2011b), Clifton and Amran (2010), Byrd (2007), Provan and Kenis (2007), Miller and Twining-Ward (2005), Bramwell and Lane (2000), and Fennell and Malloy (1999), among others, we have

identified the following actors to contain our framework: *international bodies*, *national government*, *local government units*, *businesses*, and *communities*. At the core of this framework are *tourists*. From the framework, the complexity of their relationship is obvious. In mapping the roles of stakeholders in governing tourism destinations, we first describe the roles of the actors we have identified.

First, **international bodies** are tourism organizations that aid in developing and managing tourism. They may be into education and training, marketing, regulations, investment, environmental management, or socio-cultural initiatives. Specifically, among others, we classify UNWTO, WTTC, and Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) under this stakeholder group. First, UNWTO<sup>3</sup> is a specialized agency of the United Nations (UN) serving as a global forum for tourism policy issues whose mandate is to promote responsible, sustainable, and universally accessible tourism, with emphasis on developing economies' needs. Second, WTTC<sup>4</sup> is the world's leading private sector international tourism organization that raises awareness on travel and tourism as one of the world's largest economic sectors with priorities spanning security and travel facilitation, crisis preparedness, management and recovery, and sustainable growth. Third, PATA<sup>5</sup> is the leading authority, advocate, and catalyst for responsible development of the travel and tourism industry to, from, and within Asia-Pacific. It provides aligned advocacy, insightful research, and innovative events to its member organizations. It is comprised of government tourism bodies, airlines and airports, hospitality organizations, educational institutions, and tour operators. Their grassroots activism allows them to speak unanimously on major tourism issues.

Second, **national government** is represented by national tourism organizations (NTOs) that regulate tourism, develop it as a major socio-economic activity to generate foreign currency and employment, and promote it within and outside the country. It is responsible for the development of the tourism industry in a particular economy. For example, in the Philippines, Japan, and Korea, this is Department of Tourism (DOT), Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO), and Korea Tourism Organization (KTO), respectively. These NTOs have other attached agencies responsible for specific mandates such as international marketing, participation in trade missions and travel trade expositions organized and sponsored by international tourism bodies, overseeing preservation, restoration, and development of tourism destinations, promoting cultural products, operating duty and tax free merchandising system, and developing tourism infrastructure and enterprise zones, among others.

Third, councils who are actively involved in promoting tourism, providing infrastructure and services to support tourism, and managing the impacts of tourism, represent the **local government units** (LGUs). They have profound authority on the local tourism industry, and play a part in conserving the very asset on which its success is dependent. According to Javier and Elazigue (2011), on community development, LGUs provide the ideal, authority, infrastructure, policy and planning procedures to maximize the benefit for its communities by creating linkages between the government and citizenry, addressing community-related issues, enforcing regulations, and channeling government framework to the community to create beneficial outcomes. Javier and Elazigue (2011) also furthered that LGUs have: a critical role on the success of its local tourism industry and a strong influence in conserving its resources.

Fourth, tourism **businesses** and allied enterprises are the response of entrepreneurs to the growth of tourism (Nongsiej & Shimray, 2017). In their pursuit to supply tourism products and services to tourists, they create employment and livelihood opportunities to local communities. According to Ramukumba et al. (2014), tourism businesses have

allowed entrepreneurs from deprived background to find livelihood and uplift their standard of living.

Fifth, **communities** are more than people living in an area (Gilmour & Fisher, 1991). They are individuals with mutually recognized interest in the resources of a destination. According to Nagarjuna (2015), communities living in or adjacent to destinations must be considered and involved in tourism activities. They can be involved through private businesses run by an outsider, enterprises run by a local entrepreneur, community enterprises, joint ventures between community and private sector, and tourism planning bodies (Nagarjuna, 2015).

Finally, **tourists**, are short-term visitors staying at least 24 h in a destination whose purpose of journey can be one of the following: leisure (recreation, holiday, health, study, religion, sport), family, business, meeting, or mission (Yiannakis & Gibson, 1992). They play various roles depending on preferences and motivations. They buy souvenirs, do business, sample a destination's cuisine, live a luxurious life, try an adventure, see the sights, observe the visited society, search for life's meaning, among others. They patronize tourism products and services and may have interest in the community, livelihood, and regulation aspects of tourism.

Having defined the basic role of each stakeholder in Fig. 3 with tourists at its core, we now deconstruct our framework (see Fig. 4). In pursuing sustainability, we grouped the international bodies, national government, and local government, as they are mandated to do regulation. On one hand, we grouped local government, businesses and community, as they are keen on livelihood creation. On the other hand, we grouped community, national government, and local government, as they can be the prime movers of conservation.

### 3.2. The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders

As we map the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders in governing tourism destination, Table 2 summarizes the corresponding stakeholder roles and responsibilities.

Table 3 summarizes the shared governance role of these grouped stakeholders. Duran (2013) defined shared governance as “a guidance process that is institutionally and technically structured, that is, based on principles, norms, procedures and practices to collectively decide about common goals for coexistence and about how to coordinate and cooperate for the achievement of decided objectives” (p. 9).

### 3.3. Discussion

We have seen from Table 2 the individual roles of tourism stakeholders and their relationships with each other. We have also seen in Table 3 how these roles and relationships adjust when they interact with each other. We underscore that specific synergies among certain stakeholders allow for regulation, livelihood creation, and conservation. As tourism generates a host of benefits, it also causes damages to natural environments, habitats, and socio-cultural aspects of local communities. Such interactions are beneficial in achieving sustainable tourism because it allows stakeholders to: cooperate to cover a wide group of challenges and at the same time to remain competitive (Angelkova et al., 2012); and collaborate with a unified goal of maximizing benefits and minimizing costs of tourism (Luo & Zhang, 2015).

### 3.4. On regulation

We were able to construe from the literature that synergy of international bodies, national government, and local government enables them to do regulation. According to Luo and Zhang (2015), tourism regulations are developed for socio-economic, environmental, and political purposes. These are formulated and enforced by a variety of institutions, including local or national governments, state and private bodies, as well as professional organizations such as legal and auditing agencies. All of which provides the governance structure. However, the

<sup>3</sup> See <http://www2.unwto.org/content/who-we-are-0>.

<sup>4</sup> See <https://www.wtcc.org/about>.

<sup>5</sup> See <https://www.pata.org/about-pata>.

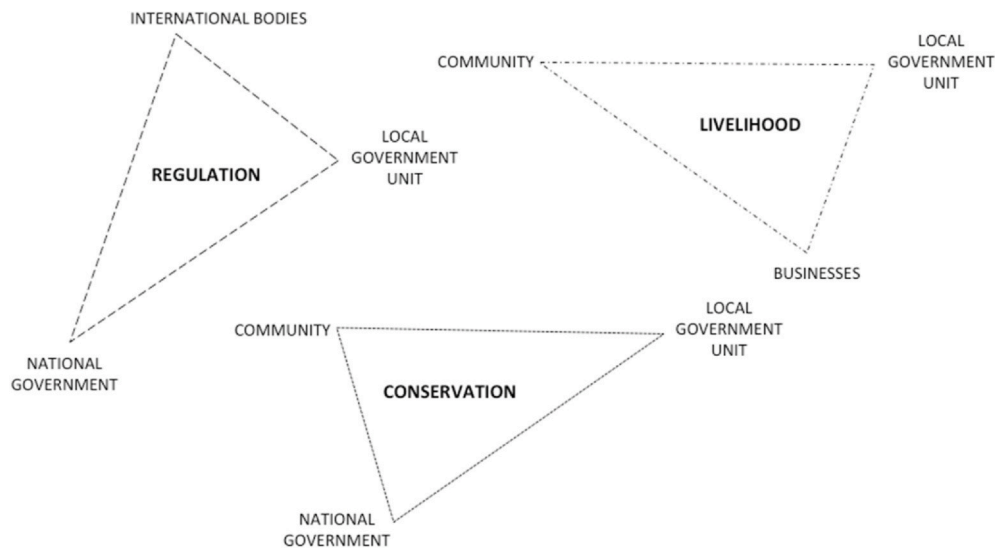


Fig. 4. Deconstructing the star model of tourism stakeholders.

**Table 2**  
Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Roles and Responsibility	Source
International Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Creation of binding mechanisms for accountability among governments and transnational actors with regards to tourism-related issues such as human rights</li> <li>● NGOs may influence governments, destination managers, and businesses in increasing their capacity and competitiveness.</li> <li>● These organizations can exert influence by introducing their practices as global standards, thereby becoming conduits where other actors can learn by interaction.</li> </ul>	<p>Erkuş-Öztürk (2011a) Duffy and Moore (2011) Morgan (1997)</p>
Government (National/ Local)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Facilitate participatory planning and monitoring to promote community empowerment</li> <li>● Promote tourism as a “people to people activity” instead of a commodity</li> <li>● Develop mechanisms to assess destination-based indicators and community-monitoring</li> <li>● Influence the social representations of tourism for local communities—how communities can benefit from its activities.</li> <li>● Influence the type of destination images that tourists “see” and “expect”</li> </ul>	<p>Moscardo (2011) Björk (2000) Stoker (1998)</p>
Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Create institutional mechanisms to facilitate sustainable development of destinations</li> <li>● Practice and promote responsible advertising and marketing by other tourism businesses, tour companies, tourism agencies, among others.</li> <li>● Promote sustainable and culturally respectful images of destinations and communities</li> <li>● Set guests expectations that are built on equality, respect, and partnership</li> <li>● Core business model can be positioned to link with social and environmental issues</li> <li>● Suggest the need to reconceptualize business processes so that value creation is done in a sustainable manner.</li> </ul>	<p>Kolk and Pinkse (2007) Moscardo (2011) Erkuş-Öztürk (2011b) Székely and Knirsch (2005)</p>
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Be active participants in creating the visual image of a destination that attract certain types of tourists</li> <li>● Ownership of the type and kinds of tourism products and services to be offered</li> <li>● Local community can therefore lose control over the development of destinations by accepting a social representation espoused by external actors (e.g., NGOs, government, tourism marketers, businesses)</li> </ul>	<p>Moscardo (2011) Bramwell (2010) Drake (1991) Murphy (1985)</p>
Tourist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In relation to livelihood creation, they can dictate what services and products will be produced and demanded. It can spur livelihood opportunities if it demands to.</li> <li>● In terms of regulation and management, they can demand for certain policies to be in place, to lobby, to raise awareness about issues and proper ways to address them. Critical to effective implementation is their cooperation.</li> <li>● In conservation initiatives, they are becoming more involved and participative to conservation efforts</li> <li>● A growing number of “sustainable = tourists” suggests their inclination towards sustainable consumption</li> </ul>	<p>Pulido-Fernández and López-Sánchez (2016) Sharpley (2014) Harrison et al. (2005)</p>

enforcement of policies aimed to regulate a destination is principally perceived under the watch of national and local governments (Bramwell, 2003). However, given the changing dimensions of central government involvement in tourism, Hall (2005) argued that government's role in managing tourism is not only hinged on the different functions of the state but also on specific management issues such as coordination and nature of state intervention.

National governments set policy frameworks inspired by the propositions of international actors such as the movement towards supporting public-private partnerships and networks. This translates to local governments' and businesses' self-governance in the form of voluntary participation to activities. Forming the traditional regulatory

body, local governments are expected to reflect interests and concerns of local people (Tosun, 2006). Similarly, national government and its agencies are perceived to have the most important role in regulating the system to which tourism development occurs (Bevir, 2009). This governance function is where the national and local government retains its full control (Jessop, 2008).

International bodies such as the UNWTO has helped established a form of global governance in the form of its code of ethics and bills on tourism. The existence of a multi-stakeholder international tourism organization such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Council has also shaped the way sustainability is being pursued (Bushell & Bricker, 2016). While arguably has little to no regulatory force, international

**Table 3**  
Shared governance role of grouped tourism stakeholders in the deconstructed Star Model.

Pillars	Shared Governance	Key Guiding Frameworks	Additional Sources
Regulation	A concerted effort among international bodies, national government, and local governments is required to facilitate the regulation of tourism destinations.	Hall (2005); Luo and Zhang (2015)	Jamal & Camargo (2014), Bevir (2009), Jessop (2008), Bramwell (2007), Tosun (2006),
Livelihood	The creation of economic and livelihood opportunities is facilitated by the partnership among local governments, businesses, and local community members.	Roxas et al. (2020)	Moscardo (2011), Bramwell (2010), Mitchell and Reid (2001), Tosun (1998), Mathur (1995)
Conservation	While conservation efforts are often fostered by the national and local governments, the participation of local community members remain critical to its success.	Aquino and Rivera (2018)	Ghoddousi et al. (2018), Bramwell (2010), Tosun (2006), Inskip (1994)
Inclusion of tourists at center of the 5-point tourism stakeholder framework of governance	Tourists play a significant role in facilitating efforts to achieve sustainability in destinations through participation in the regulation, creation of livelihood, and conservation of destinations.	Buhalis and Fletcher (1995); Sautter and Leisen (1999); Franco and Estevão (2010); Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Center (2009) as cited by PATA (2015)	Pulido-Fernández and López-Sánchez (2016), Edgell (2016), Sharpley (2014), Hedlund (2013), Wehrli et al. (2011), Krutwaysho and Bramwell (2010), Okello and Yerian (2009), Okello et al. (2008), Becken (2005), Cukier (2002), Edensor (2001), Ashley (2000), Johnston (1997)

institutions serve as influences for national governments to follow (Jamal & Camargo, 2014). However, because of the changing dimensions of governance (Hall, 2005), the UNWTO is moving towards formulating tourism law for the sustainable development, management, and regulation of the industry through detailing the rights and responsibilities of national governments, suppliers, and consumers in the sustainable use of natural and cultural resources for development (UNWTO, 2013).

### 3.5. On livelihood

Similarly, we were able to construe from the literature that the synergy of local government, businesses, and community enable them to generate livelihood. LGUs have the role of facilitating and regulating the relationships between tourism-related businesses and community members. They often take the role of prioritizing profits and capital accumulation in the economy through the creation of employment opportunities in destinations (Bramwell, 2015). As shown by Moscardo (2011) in analyzing the case of African nations, small stakeholder groups can also facilitate tourism planning geared towards creating economic opportunities and livelihood in a destination in the form of social representations. These groups are often comprised of businesses that arguably prioritize economic interests over local community's needs. In addressing this, Mathur (1995) looked into the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who serve as extensions and agents of local community members. These NGOs serve as institutional tools that empower local communities by voicing out their interests in livelihood creation, as well as, conservation, as shown in the case of India. In Peru, greater local community participation in tourism activities has paved the way for the people to gain increased earnings (Mitchell & Reid, 2001), which helped satisfy their own needs (Tosun, 1998). These situations are reflected in the sustainable tourism framework developed by Roxas et al. (2020) and the model of Franco and Estevão (2010), which highlighted the importance of tourism public-private partnerships (PPP) in facilitating local and regional development.

### 3.6. On conservation

Correspondingly, we were also able to construe from the literature that synergy of national government, local government, and community enables them to do conservation. Conservation work and resource management often involve the community, non-government organizations, and to an extent, national government (Bramwell, 2015). As suggested by Tosun (2006) and Inskip (1994), conservation efforts can

be easily achieved through community participation, specifically by ensuring that they gain larger benefits from tourism development. This is supported by the case of Golestan National Park, Iran wherein residents receiving benefits from tourism activities serve as facilitators of conservation in destinations (Ghoddousi et al., 2018). Increasing partnerships for conservation among the national and local governments and communities also influences responsible business practices as shown in the case of Arawak National Park, Australia (Bushell & Bricker, 2016).

These are consistent with the PPP framework of Aquino and Rivera (2018) for the conservation of Masungi Georeserve, Philippines, which provides “a possible mechanism for the governance, conservation, and overall management” (p. 122) of tourism destinations. It fosters a more concerted effort of all stakeholders involved in sustainable development.

### 3.7. The role of tourists in regulation, livelihood, and conservation

Travelers have been demonstrating rising awareness in environmentally and socially responsible forms of tourism, and patronizing tourism enterprises that offer more sustainable services. “This evolution is clearly illustrated by the emergence of concepts such as ecotourism, responsible tourism, and green travel” (Landthaler, 2014, par. 6) and the emergence of voluntary sustainability standards, codes, and labels that made these equivocal terms relatable. Hence, tourists play a significant role in facilitating efforts to achieve sustainability in destinations. Tourists can materialize their interest in sustainability by being mindful of their impact, which can elicit a huge collective difference (Houghton, 2018). Purposely, Houghton (2018) emphasized that an increasing number of tourists are now becoming involved in: taking part in minimizing waste and pollution; participating in the conservation of natural environments; supporting local communities; respecting and preserving culture; prioritizing animal welfare in destinations; and giving back to the destinations by making sure any form of contributions generate a positive difference. This is aligned with UNWTO's *Travel. Enjoy. Respect* campaign.<sup>6</sup>

In including tourists in our 5-point tourism stakeholder framework of governance, we appeal to the model of Franco and Estevão (2010) that combined local government, tour operators, tourism industry, universities, public sector and government, tourist destination community, and tourists. Buhalis and Fletcher (1995) and Sautter and

<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.travelenjoyrespect.org/>.



Leisen (1999) also highlighted the role of tourists in sustainable development. Ultimately, PATA (2015) cited the Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Center (2009) wherein the tourists, together with the community, underpin the entire structure of local government pathways to sustainable tourism.

Choices tourists make can influence the ranges of products and services that will be developed in destinations as shown in the case of the development of the tourist circuit in Tanzania (Okello & Yerian, 2009) and Kenya (Okello et al., 2008). Echoing this sentiment of Pulido-Fernández and López-Sánchez (2016), the significance and effect of tourists in pursuing sustainability is indispensable.

The changing tourists profile, preferences, and consumption indicated increasing sustainability awareness. A growing number of tourists are now promoting sustainable products and services with the aim of protecting the environmental area in a destination (Hedlund, 2013; Wehrli et al., 2011). To an extent, the term “sustainable tourist” has been coined to characterize a tourist with pro-sustainable tourism attitudes (Sharpley, 2014). Similarly, a growing number of destinations responded to tourists' growing demand for more sustainable tourism options (Edgell, 2016). Tourists play a significant role in heeding and implementing regulatory instruments that are institutionalized by the governments and local community. Their voluntary participation can mean successful implementation of policies and rules (Edensor, 2001; Johnston, 1997). More evidently, tourists drive economic activities in destinations that create employment opportunities and livelihood, which enhances local benefits (Ashley, 2000; Cukier, 2002). In conservation, tourists' consumption pattern and choices can directly contribute to environmental protection. Through their awareness and promotion of sustainability, changes on the environmental area of a destination can be achieved (Becken, 2005). To an extent, conservation has also become an incentive to preserve the tourist experience in a destination (Krutwaysho & Bramwell, 2010).

In conjunction with Roxas et al. (2020), stakeholders play a role in making sustainable tourism successful or unsuccessful. While we have seen the regulatory roles of authorities, it is also imperative to emphasize on the vital environmental role of businesses. With the goal of ensuring the financial sustainability of their operations, businesses are now more involved in supporting local efforts to conserve and preserve natural areas and resources (Duarte Alonso & Bressan, 2013; Moscardo, 2011). Changing business attitudes have bolstered the relevance of environmental issues to a business' competitive advantage (Rosen & Sellers, 2000). Part of this effort are promoting sustainability (Moscardo, 2011) and aligning operations to green practices (Al-Aomar & Hussain, 2017; Wong et al., 2015).

Together with the environmental role of tourists (Houghton, 2018), it is also essential to underscore the economic role of tourists. Critical to tourism activities is tourist participation, which enhances economic gains through social interactions (Liang et al., 2013). Specifically, tourist expenditures are the primary source of revenues of tourism destinations. These expenditures would be channeled to support the development of products and services that further improve tourism experiences (Milne & Ateljevic, 2001). Moreover, according to Nimri et al. (2017), certain consumer beliefs form purchasing decisions of green products, such as hotel accommodations. Similarly, Shin et al. (2017) expounded on value-attitude-behavior approach wherein altruistic value affects biosphere values, which then influences pro-environmental attitudes in consumption choices. Furthermore, tourists have the ability to influence the demand for certain tourism products and services (Pulido-Fernández & López-Sánchez, 2016), which make them critical actors in tourism development.

We have also seen that socio-economic and political factors influence stakeholder behavior in pursuing sustainability. For PATA (2015), pursuing sustainable tourism is not just about stakeholders assuming specific roles but rather an engagement process guided by identifying the stakeholders and understanding their roles, interests, and motives. There is a need to recognize the concerns and goals of all tourism

stakeholders. This is important for planning, decision-making, and developing mutually beneficial strategies and actions. It is also necessary to engage stakeholders based on their interest, skills, and expertise to ensure a comprehensive basis of knowledge for planning. To gain support from stakeholders and involve them in tourism planning and management, they must understand the value of tourism in terms of the TBL. Driven by their respective understandings on sustainable tourism, stakeholders have varying approaches to achieving it. These incongruities create confusion, inaction, and poor decision-making and implementation (Agyeiwaah et al., 2017). Thus, cohesive and unified common goals and actions that are scientifically valid and operational must be founded (Tanguay et al., 2013). For PATA (2015), a shared understanding of tourism, comprised of the values and ideals of a destination that drive an agreed tourism focus, is vital. These are aligned with a multi-stakeholder approach to tourism (Björk, 2000; Peric et al., 2014) that will facilitate the development and implementation of market-orientated service strategies to boost sustainability advocacies (Wu & Cheng, 2017).

#### 4. Conclusions

As the discourse on sustainable tourism continues to evolve, the translation from concepts to practical applications has been significant. Prospects of pursuing sustainable tourism have formed part of international and local governance agenda. Stakeholders are becoming more concerned as to how destinations can be developed and managed sustainably.

While literature emphasized the value of stakeholder participation in pursuing sustainability by identifying who the stakeholders are and what their roles are, there is a need to further investigate their interaction with each other, more specifically how this interaction modify their roles and responsibilities, as well as, how their interactions can aid in achieving sustainability, particularly SDG17 – partnership for the goals.

By reviewing frameworks on stakeholder interactions in tourism, we have corroborated studies underscoring that the tourism industry involves a complex network of stakeholder groups that have an interest in the management and development of destinations. In our pursuit to operationalize the concept of sustainable tourism by mapping the roles and synergies of stakeholders in governing tourism destinations, we were able to: identify who the stakeholders are and understand what their roles, interests, and motives are. Both are vital in designing a suitable engagement process and creating synergies.

Recognizing that tourism is a value chain, we highlighted that support, commitment, and cooperation of tourism stakeholders are critical in boosting sustainable tourism. These are key to establishing synergies among tourism stakeholders that can harness their respective roles and collaborative advantages in governing destinations. The industry needs to acknowledge how different tourism value chain members can contribute to enriching tourists' experience and creating livelihood for communities. As such, there must be an agreed vision among stakeholders that focus on pursuing sustainable tourism. By introducing a governance structure among stakeholders in managing destinations, synergies were identified that established communication, modalities, and co-responsibility in achieving sustainability.

Through our 5-point tourism stakeholder framework of governance, the value of cooperation and interaction among stakeholders was accentuated. While complementing existing studies by identifying international bodies, national government, local government, local community, businesses, and tourists as tourism stakeholders, our framework stressed the ways these actors contribute to sustainability through regulation, conservation, and livelihood-creation. Our framework recognized tourists' active role in contributing to sustainability. Positioned at the center of the framework, they are seen as active participants in strengthening regulation, conservation, and livelihood-creation.

We contributed to tourism knowledge by presenting a framework that proposes ways in which tourism stakeholders can take advantage of their roles and collaborative advantages in governing destinations. Through our framework, we provided perspectives on how sustainability can be approached via stakeholder governance mindset. Our framework encourages the exploration of multiple paths towards achieving sustainability. Specifically, to foster sustainability in terms of regulation, stringent standards, protocols, and measures can be instituted (i.e., permit to operate only for compliant enterprises; penalties for violating stakeholders). In terms of conservation, an organized application and firm implementation of carrying capacity measures can be established, which experts from the policymaking body and grassroots-level stakeholders can determine. Meanwhile, in terms of livelihood creation, a recalibrated, organized, and seamless value chain that will allow stakeholders to partake in the benefits of sustainable tourism can be prompted. At the core of this governance framework are tourists, who are not seen as a customer but as a stakeholder of sustainability. By redesigning tourists' experience that increases their participation in local customs, their travel perspective can be transformed. They will practice sustainable tourism through their conscious protection and accountability of environments and travel behavior. They are committed to patronizing tourism activities and in complying with local protocols, observing environmental ethics, respecting local communities, and taking part in the distribution of development in communities.

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